MINUTES FOR NAPRA GENERAL MEETING JAN 12th

I. Called to order by Ken, N7IPB, President at 1:09 PM. Introductions of all in attendance were made.

II. Treasurer, Peter, WA7FUS, reported a balance of $1256.03. Some dues are due. Check the address label on your recent issue of Zero Retries.

III. Minutes of the December 8th general meeting were read by the Secretary, John, KA7TTY and approved.

IV. Business

A. The 440 Hub Repeater - Ken, N7IPB - reported that is is not up yet. It has been roughly tuned up. The receiver is working, but the wrong crystal was obtained. A new crystal is on order.

B. Steve, N8GNJ, Membership Services Chairman, reported that the main goal of NAPRA was to enhance packet radio. We also publish a quarterly newsletter, but the major portion of the dues goes to improving the network. We have plans that will make major improvements to the network this year. He encouraged anyone who was not yet a member to pick up an application and join.

C. Tech VP Report - Scott, N7FSP
1. BALDY Node has receiver problems according to Doug Lux, WB6VAC, who was up at the site last week.
2. SEA Node software has been upgraded to TheNET 2.06. SEAW should get upgraded next week.
3. Bill, AA6ED, is running a telephone BBS with radio info on 271-4657. With the right access level assigned to you, Bills system will let you connect out into the packet radio network. Call it up and log in and leave a message for Bill and he will set you up.

4. Scott, N7FSP, has a node running on 223.42 MHz for BBS forwarding only. Several BBSs are currently using it and he hopes more will make use of it and move more BBS forwarding off the backbone.

5. The White Pages server in our area is Mike, W0LVJ. To use the system, send your request to SP WP @ W0LVJ. For Hams outside our area, send to SP WP @ AD8I .
6. #SEAs antenna is gone; partialy blown away in the recent storm. Doug, WB6VAC, was able to connect us to a 220 antenna which is there and not currently being used because its tranceiver is off the air and out being repaired. We will be getting a new antenna for ourselves soon.

7. EVT Node is off the air so we do not have a path to VE land. Recent flooding left the building in which he was located in a condition where it could not be secured. Ralph elected to remove the equipment before it walked, and will reinstall it once the security problem is corrected.

8. NPT Node in Port Townsend may have its 220 antenna raised 70 feet in the near future. This should greatly improve the reliability of the backbone to that site.

C. The Board of Directors Meeting

1. The BOD processed many Frequency Coordination Requests this morning. We are glad to see the response as it makes our database of information on what the network is really doing much more useful.

2. Scott, N7FSP, Tech VP, is forming a Node Up-grade Committee and is looking for anyone interested in helping. Contact Scott after the meeting if you are interested.

D. Exec VP Report - Dennis, KB7DZ -

1. Ragchew - We have 4 regular net controls, but can always use more for 5th Thursdays and times when regular net control can't make it. Contact Dennis if you are interested.

2. General Meeting Programs - are needed. Anyone interested in putting on a program, or who knows someone who might put on a program, contact Dennis. We are also interested in ideas for possible guest speakers.

3. Todays program will be a general discussion/ question/ answer session.

E. Scott, N7FSP, has a copy of the latest Boeing BEARS Bulletin if anyone is interested in looking at it. He also has some free Boeing calanders for anyone who wants one.

F. OLY to LSO path - There has been some testing going on between these sites on 220 MHz. We may have this added to the network in the future!

G. Oregon - The Oregon packet community seems to be concentrating on improving local networks. They will be taking more backbone equipment off 220.95 MHz in the future.

H. LSO activities - They have added a 3rd TNC, and an 11 element beam pointed at OLY. As already mentioned, testing has been very promising. They could use a couple of the 440 Micor radios. They were asked to contact the BEARS directly (Russ Kroeker, N7HGE, or Larry Babcock, WB7USL) regarding the radios.

I. 440 frequencies - NAPRA does not have any coordination on 440. Any requests for frequency pairs needs to be made through the WWARA for either a repeater pair or for a linking pair. For simplex operation, just use a simplex frequency.

J. NAPRA officers have been invited by Dick, K7TPN, from Port Townsend to a 5.03 Lan users meeting next Saturday, Jan 16th, in Pt. Townsend. Ken, N7IPB, indicated he will probably attend.

K. Zero Retries - Steve, N8GNJ, reported that the deadline for the next issue was near, and advised that inputs needed to be in soon.

L. Constitution changes - were read again at this meeting and a vote taken. It was unanimously passed.

M. Short Break

N. Discussion led by Dennis, KB7DZ, and Ken, N7IPB

1. Anyone who missed the 18 part series "Introduction to Packet Radio" that Scott, N7FSP, has been entering as bulletins on the BBSs (currently 14 of the 18 have been entered) and wants the whole thing at once can send Scott a blank 5 1/4 disk with SASE mailer and he will return the whole thing to you.

2. 145.64 MHz packet activity - There is currently NO coordinated packet activity on that frequency. It is probably keyboard to keyboard stuff, which is perfectly legal. If it looks like a permanent fixture like a BBS, then they could be asked to seek a coordinated node for operation, but as keyboard to keyboard, they have as much right to the frequency as anyone. They do have the responsibility to listen to the frequency before they jump on, just as any voice operator does, to be sure they are not causing interference, and to also use a low power as will still allow communication for the same reason. NAPRA does not coordinate any frequencies for keyboard to keyboard operation, as WWARA does not coordinate any simplex voice frequencies.

3. 56K baud operations - Jack, WA4FIB, recently moved here from Georga where he was active with GRAPES. He is located in the Bothell area and has been asking around about 56k operation in this area (there currently is none). Peter, WA7FUS, will contact him for a possible future program to enlighten us and maybe get some experiments going in this area.

4. TCP/IP Group - Steve, N8GNJ, said his disk crashed last night. Since he has been operating as the traffic hub for TCP/IP, everything has come to a halt. He was seeking someone to take over the function at least until he gets a new disk up and running. Ken, N7IPB, agreed to fill in.

5. BBS Operation vs. TCP/IP - Don, WA7QEU, discussed the needs of BBSs and a concern over the use of the network by TCP/IP. He was assured that as implimented here in western Washington it does not impact the backbone more than other users. In fact it probably impacts it less when the frequency gets busy since it uses a varible FRAC value. The time between retries gets longer with each try.

6. Keyboard to keyboard operation on a node frequency - was discussed again. There was concern that NAPRA was not doing enough to discourage it. We pointed out the section on our Information Sheet titled "Direct and Deadly". Dennis, KB7DZ, had written an article some years ago for Zero Retries with the same title. He will see about re-publishing it in the future.

7. TCP vs. AX.25 - there was more discussion as in 5. above concerning why TCP/IP appears to be a frequency hop, but really is not. If the frequency is not busy, TCP/IP will use the frequency and may transfer large amounts of data. However, as explained above, as soon as there is other traffic on frequency and it starts to experience retries, it also starts to back off and increase the time between tries. In contrast, AX.25 has a fixed FRAC time and will continue to retry on that schedule until successful or retried out. In an all TCP/IP network, as the frequency got busy, all stations would start using extended FRAC times, spreading out the tries and reducing collisions until data started flowing again. Individual data rates would slow down for everyone as the system reached its optimum data rate.

O. Meeting was ajourned at 3:55 PM

John - KA7TTY
Secretary